

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of the Claims:

Claims 1-12 (Canceled).

Claim 13 (currently amended): A microfabrication method, comprising:

first forming a resist pattern on a cobalt-platinum alloy layer to be etched;
forming a patterned tantalum mask on said cobalt-platinum alloy comprising
sputtering a tantalum mask layer using a tantalum target; and
reactive dry etching said cobalt-platinum alloy layer using said tantalum mask, under
a first reaction gas comprising carbon monoxide and a nitrogen containing gas, wherein
said cobalt-platinum alloy layer is selectively etched

~~The method of claim 11, further comprising:~~

~~prior to said forming a patterned tantalum mask, first forming a resist pattern on said~~
~~cobalt-platinum alloy layer; and~~
~~sputtering a tantalum mask layer using a tantalum target.~~

Claim 14 (previously presented): The method of claim 13, said sputtering
comprising sputtering under a gas comprising argon.

Claim 15 (currently amended): A microfabrication method, comprising:
first forming a resist pattern on a cobalt-platinum alloy layer to be etched;
forming a patterned tantalum nitride mask on said cobalt-platinum alloy layer
comprising reactive-sputtering a tantalum nitride mask layer using a tantalum target under
a second reaction gas comprising at least a nitrogen containing gas; and
reactive dry etching said cobalt-platinum alloy layer using said tantalum nitride
mask, under a first reaction gas comprising carbon monoxide and a nitrogen containing
gas, wherein said cobalt-platinum alloy layer is selectively etched

~~The method as claimed in claim 12, further comprising:~~
~~prior to forming a patterned tantalum nitride mask, first forming a resist pattern on~~
~~said~~
~~cobalt-platinum layer; and~~
~~reactive sputtering a tantalum nitride mask layer using a tantalum target under a~~
~~second reaction gas comprising at least a nitrogen containing gas.~~

Claim 16 (currently amended): A microfabrication method, comprising:
first forming a resist pattern on a cobalt-platinum alloy layer;
forming a patterned tantalum nitride mask on said cobalt-platinum alloy layer to be
etched comprising sputtering a tantalum nitride mask layer using a tantalum nitride target;
and

reactive dry etching said cobalt-platinum alloy layer using said tantalum nitride mask, under a first reaction gas comprising carbon monoxide and a nitrogen containing gas, wherein said cobalt-platinum alloy layer is selectively etched

~~The method as claimed in claim 12, further comprising:~~

~~prior to said forming a patterned tantalum nitride mask, first forming a resist pattern on said cobalt-platinum alloy layer, and sputtering a tantalum nitride mask layer using a tantalum nitride target.~~

Claim 17 (previously presented): The method of claim 16, said sputtering comprising sputtering under a gas comprising argon.

Claim 18-25 (canceled):

Claim 26 (previously presented): The method of claim 13, further comprising: after said sputtering, removing from said cobalt-platinum alloy layer, said resist pattern having said mask layer deposited thereon, to form a patterned mask.

Claim 27 (previously presented): The method of claim 15, further comprising: after said sputtering, removing from said cobalt-platinum alloy layer, said resist pattern having said mask layer deposited thereon, to form a patterned mask.

Claim 28 (previously presented): The method of claim 16, further comprising:
after said sputtering, removing from said cobalt-platinum alloy layer, said resist
pattern having said mask layer deposited thereon, to form a patterned mask.